THE

HUNTING

OF

Chievy Chace

AN HEROIC BALLAD.

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CHEVY CHACE.

GOD prosper long our noble King,
our lives and safties all,
A woeful hunting once their did
in Chievy-chace befal.
To hunt the deer with hound and horn,
Earl Piercy took his way,
The child may rue that was unborn,
the hunting of that day.
The stout earl of Northumberland,
a vow to God did make.
His pleasure in the Scottish woods,
three summer days to take.
The choicest harts in Chievy chace,
to kill and bear away.
These tidings to earl Douglas came,
in Scotland where he lay,
Who sent earl Piercy present word,
he would prevent his sport,
The English earl not fearing this,
did to the woods resort.
With twenty hundred bowmen bright,
all chosen men of might,
Who knew full well in time of need,
to aim their shafts aright.
The gallant grey hounds swiftly ran,
to take the fallow dear,
On Monday they began to hunt,
when day light did appear.
And long before high noon, they had
and hundred fat bucks slain:
And having din'd, the drovers went
to to rouse them up again.
The bowmen muster'd on the hill,
well able to endure,

Their backsides all, with special care
that day were guarded sure.
The hounds ran swifty through the woods
the nimble deer to take,
And with their cries the hills and dales
an echo shrill did make.
Earl Piercy to the quarry went,
to view the fallow deer;
Quoth he earl Douglas promised
this day to meet me here;
But if I thought he would not come,
no longer would I stay.
With that a brave young gentleman,
thus to the earl did say,
Lo! yonder doth lord Douglas come,
his men in armour bright,
Full fifteen hundred Scottish spears,
all marching in our sight
All men of pleasant Tividale,
fast by the river Tweed.
Then cease your sport earl Piercy said,
and take your bows with speed.
And now with me, my countrymen,
your courage to advance.
There was ne'er a champion born
in Scotland or in France,
That ever did on horseback come,
but if my hap it were,
I durst encounter man for man,
with him to break a spear.
Lord Douglas on a milk white steed,
most like a baron bold,
Rode foremost of his company
whose armour shone like gold.
Shew me, said he, whose men ye be,
that hunt so boldly here;

That without my consent do chace,
and kill my fallow dear?
The first man that did answer make,
was noble Percy he,
Who said, we list not to declare,
and shew who's men we be;
Yet we will spend our dearest blood,
the choicest harts to slay.
Then Douglas swore a solemn oath,
and thus in rage did say,
Ere I shall thus outbraved be,
one of us two shall die.
I know the well, an earl thou art,
lord Percy, so am I.
But trust me Percy, pity 'twere
and great offence to kill
These innocent men on either side,
for they have done no ill.
Let thee and me the battle try,
and set our men aside.
Accurst be he, said earl Percy,
by whom it is denyed.
Then stept a gallant 'squire forth,
Withrington was his name,
Who said, he would not have told
to Henry our king for shame.
That e'er my captain fought on foot,
and stood looking on.
You be two lords, said Withrington,
and I a 'squire alone,
I'll do the best that I can do,
while I have power to stand;
While I have power to wield a sword,
I'll fight with heart and hand.
The Scottish archers bent their bows,
their hearts were good and true,

At the firſt ſight of arrows ſent,
fourſcore of Engliſh flew.
To drive the deer with hound and horn,
Douglas bade on the bent,
Both captains mov'd with meikle pride,
their ſpears in ſhivers went.
They clos'd full faſt on either ſide.
no flackneſs there was found,
And many a gallant gentleman,
lay gaſping on the ground.
Oh! but it was grief to ſee,
and likewiſe for to hear
The cries of men lying in their gore,
and ſcattered here and there.
At laſt theſe two ſtout earls did meet,
like chieftans of great might,
Like lions mov'd, they feared no lord,
they made a gallant fight.
They fought until they both did ſweat,
with ſwords of tempered ſteel,
Until the blood like drops of rain,
they trickling did fall.
Yield thee, Lord Piercy, Douglas ſaid,
in truth I will thee bring,
Where thou ſhalt high advanced be,
by James our noble king.
Thy ranſom I will freely give,
and this report of thee,
Thou art the moſt courageous knight,
that ever I did ſee.
No, Douglas, quoth lord Piercy, then,
thy proffer I do ſcorn,
I will not yield to any Scot,
that ever yet was born.
With there came an arrow keen,
out of an Engliſh bow,

Which ſtruck lord Douglas to the heart
a deep and deadly blow.
Who never ſpoke more words than theſe,
fight on my merry men all;
For why my life is at an end,
lord Piercy ſees me fall.
Then leaving life, lord Piercy took
the dead man by the hand,
Saying, lord Douglas for thy ſake,
would I had loſt my land!
Oh! but my very heart doth bleed
with ſorrow for thy ſake,
For ſure a more renowned knight
miſchance did never take.
A knight among the Scots there was
who ſaw earl Douglas die,
Who ſtraight in wrath did vow revenge
upon the earl Piercy.
Sir Hugh Montgomery he was called,
who with a ſpear full bright
Well mounted on a gallant ſteed,
rode fiercly through the fight.
He paſt the Engliſh archers all,
without either dread or fear,
And through earl Piercy's body then,
he thruſt his boldful ſpear.
With ſuch a vehement force and might
he did his body gore,
The ſpear went through the other ſide,
a full cloth-yard and more.
So thus did both the nobles die,
whoſe courage none could ſtain.
An Engliſh archer then perceiv'd,
his noble lord was ſlain;
He had a bow bent in his hand,
made of a trufty tree,

An arrow of a cloth-yard's length,
unto the head drew he
Against Sir Hugh Montgomery then,
so right his shaft he set,
The grey goose wing that was thereon,
and his heart's blood was wet.
This fight did last from break of day,
till setting of the sun.
For when the evening bells were rung
the battle scarce was done.
With the lord Piercy there was slain,
Sir John of Ogerton,
Sir Robert Ratcliff, and Sir John,
Sir James that bold baron;
Sir George, and also good Sir Hugh,
both knights of good account;
Good Sir Ralph Rabby there was slain,
who's prowess did surmount.
For Withrington I needs must wail,
as one in doleful dumps,
For when his legs were smitten off,
he fought upon his stumps.
And with the earl Douglas there was slain,
Sir Hugh Montgomery,
Sir Charles Murray, that from the field
one foot would never flee.
Sir Charles Murray of Ratcliff too,
his sister's son was he,
Sir David Lamb so well esteem'd,
yet saved could not be.
And the lord Maxwell in likewise
did with earl Douglas die.
Of fifteen hundred Scottish speares,
went home but fifty-three;
Of twenty hundred Englishmen,
scarce fifty-five did flee.

The rest were slain at Chievy chase,
under the green-wood tree:
Next day did many widows come,
their husbands to bewail:
They wash'd their wounds in briny tears,
but all could not prevail.
Their bodies bath'd in purple gore,
they bore with them away;
They kiss'd them dead a thousand times,
when they were cold as clay.
The news was brought to Edinburgh,
where Scotland's king did reign,
That brave earl Douglas suddenly,
was with an arrow slain.
Now God be with him said our king,
since it will no better be,
I trust I have in my realm,
five hundred as good as he.
These tidings to king Henry came,
within as short a space,
That Piercy of Northumberland,
was slain at Chievy chace.
O heavy news! King Henry cried,
England can witness be.
I have not any captain more,
of such account as he.
Now of the rest of small account,
did many hundreds die.
Thus ends the battle of Chievy chace,
made by the earl Piercy.
God save the King and bless the land
with plenty, joy and peace,
And grant henceforth that foul debate
'twixt noblemen may cease.

FINIS.